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NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/YERGER  
DEPT PASS TO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/22/2018

TAGS: PGOV PREL PTER MOPS JO SY LE

SUBJECT: LEBANON: JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR: NEED TO DETACH  
SYRIA FROM IRAN

Classified By: CDA Michele J. Sison for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

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¶11. (C) Jordanian Ambassador to Lebanon H.E. Ziad al Majali stressed the frequency with which his government communicates with regional players, especially Saudi Arabia, on Lebanon. He noted the importance of Jordanian relations with Syria because of their roles in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. It is of regional interest to detach Syria from Iran, he said, and said regional governments were considering how to accomplish this goal. End summary.

SAUDI-JORDANIAN COORDINATION

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¶12. (C) The Charge, accompanied by PolOff, paid a courtesy call on Jordanian Ambassador to Lebanon H.E. Ziad al Majali on April 22. Majali said his government is in "weekly contact with our friends" to discuss Lebanon, referring to Saudi Arabia in particular. He said that King Abdullah of Jordan and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabi had intended to reward Syria at the negotiating table (presumably referring to the Arab League summit) if it had curbed its interference in Lebanese affairs. Majali reported that Jordanian King Abdullah has warned that there is a regional dynamic to the Lebanese crisis, on a larger scale than Iraq, and that if Lebanon explodes, everything is affected in a major way.

¶13. (C) Referring to Speaker Nabih Berri's recent visit to Qatar, Majali dismissed anything of substance coming out of Doha on Lebanon. The Qatars are only concerned with how their actions affect Saudi Arabia, he said.

BREAKING SYRIA FROM IRAN

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¶14. (C) "Jordan needs Syria for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process," Majali noted, while asserting that the relationship between Syria and Iran is a serious problem. He said his government and its Arab allies want to convince Syrian President Bashar Assad to break from the Iranian regime and return to the Arab world. He said he suspects Syria has not yet detached itself from Iran because it is not considering the bigger picture. Assad is a liar, Majali remarked, and therefore it is impossible to do confidence-building measures with Syria.

SISON